

KILGORE'S KILLING.

The Shooting of John H. Oldridge.

ANOTHER HORRID HOMICIDE.

Testimony Given at the Coroner's Inquest—Was it Self-Defense?

Yesterday morning the quiet of the city which had ruled for many weeks in criminal circles was rudely broken by the report that Ira B. Kilgore, book keeper for Mr. S. W. Luitwiler, had shot another employee, John H. Oldridge, in the establishment on the corner of Los Angeles and Requena streets. Immediately after the killing—for the ball struck Oldridge in front of a little below the left shoulder and ranging downward pierced the aorta, producing instant death—the slayer, in company with Mr. Luitwiler, went to the Police office where Kilgore gave himself into the custody of the officers of the law. The body of the dead man was conveyed to the morgue at the office of Orr & Stotz, where an autopsy was made and at 2 P.M., an inquest was held in the presence of a Coroner's jury.

Prior to the legal investigation it was currently reported that there had been bad blood between the men for some time past. On two occasions they had come to blows, in which Kilgore always came out second best. There were various accounts also as to the cause of the killing, but there will be more truly brought out by giving the testimony obtained under oath. The man killed has friends for him, and the defense for the people, and H. T. Gage Esq. for the defendant. The first witness called was

S. LUITWILER.

The employer of the two men, parties to the affair, and proprietor of the establishment where the homicide took place. A delay was occasioned waiting for the slayer to be present to hear all the testimony.

Mr. Luitwiler testified substantially as follows: I know John H. Oldridge. He was in my employment at the time of his death. He died at about 8:15 this morning, in my office, on the second floor of the building, corner Los Angeles and Requena streets, in this city, county and State.

He was foreman of my paint shop. He had been in my employ about a year and a half. I saw him die. I did not know what caused his death. I was not present. From the time he was born until now, I did not hear any sound of him. I had not seen him since yesterday afternoon. Before the death I saw him in the office part of the building. I just came up, I sent Kilgore with a message to Oldridge. He was my bookkeeper. Had died since July 1st. To try to fit up he had been my employ since about January 1st as last.

I told Kilgore to go upstairs and inform Oldridge if he did not want to stand up there, so he could take his things and go home. Kilgore had previously made the request to touch up the shafts in question. I can assure you that Kilgore told Oldridge he had been upstairs and asked Oldridge to touch up a certain pair of shafts for a wagon that was sold. Kilgore told me Oldridge said he would get out of the wagon. He commented that Kilgore was like a dog. I told Oldridge and Mr. Luitwiler told him that Kilgore was prepared for him. Oldridge and I came down stairs, and Oldridge told him that old Kilgore's word was "chumpkin." I am not sure about this. Then I told Kilgore to take the message above to Oldridge.

I was in the office and heard some one call my name. I came out and saw Mr. Kilgore. He said he had shot Oldridge. I went up stairs, and saw Oldridge lying on the carpet. I ran over to him and told him that Oldridge was dying. He asked me to go with him to police headquarters and give him up. That is all. On the way he stated that when he had been with Kilgore he had a knife at him and also a cap, and was coming at him and was within a few feet of him when he shot him. That is all.

I was in Oldridge's office before Kilgore, when I came from dinner one noon about two months ago, Kilgore told me that Oldridge struck him and I told him to stand up. While under arrest and when in the custody of Constable Ledbetter, Oldridge broke loose and struck Kilgore, drawing blood and blinding his eye. This happened in Oldridge's office to that I know of no trouble.

Subsequent to this I have known of nothing in the way of an outburst. Kilgore had once or twice been drunk, but had never been drunk since Oldridge still harbored ill feelings. After the thrashing Kilgore said to me, "I will stand no more of his foolishness. Kilgore has been arrested twice. He is now to go up with the first trial message. It is part of his duty.

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The dead man was English by birth and came to America with his parents at the age of twelve years. He had been in Los Angeles for the past three years. His home recently has been, as stated, in a two-story house on the north side of Second street, midway between Olive and Clay. They were both employees of mine. It was Kilgore who first informed me of his attack. That is the way he came to go up with the first trial message. It is part of his duty.

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